



# Suicide Risk Factors

Suicide is a serious problem in the military. Knowledge about the risk factors for suicide can assist with prevention, identification, early intervention and can save lives. To help with the recognition of individuals who may be at risk for suicide, the acronym **SUICIDE** was developed. This acronym outlines the major behavioral and psychological risk factors often associated with suicidal behavior. Have the courage to help a sailor, marine or family member in need.

- S** **SUICIDE ATTEMPTS** Individuals who have made previous suicide attempts- especially those with potentially lethal means (weapons), are at very high risk for suicide.
- U** **UTTER HOPELESSNESS** Individuals who are feeling extremely helpless, hopeless, desperate and worthless and who do not have plans for the future are at risk for self-harm.
- I** **ISOLATION** Individuals who are alone and feel lonely and helpless, isolate themselves and who lack social, work and religious supports are at risk.
- C** **CLOSE RELATIONSHIP LOSS** Individuals who perceive or believe that they have lost an important relationship (romantic, spouse, friend, including the death of a loved one) may be at risk for suicide.
- I** **IDEATION** Persons who are thinking and speaking about suicide are at high risk as are those with a suicide plan.
- D** **DEPRESSION** Individuals who are feeling sad, depressed, bitter, or moody, are pessimistic and withdrawn and have lost their interests are at high risk for suicide.
- E** **ETHANOL (ALCOHOL)** Persons who depend upon or abuse alcohol and/or misuse drugs, which may include prescription medications, are at risk for self-harm.